

## **State Accreditation Committee Meeting**

### **Minutes**

**Friday, January 15, 2016**

The Nebraska State Accreditation Committee met at the Cornhusker Hotel in Lincoln. Chair Mike Sieh called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and declared a quorum present and established the legality of the meeting.

Members present were the following: Elizabeth Boyle, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Abby Freeman, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Msgr. John Perkinson, Kevin Riley, Joe'l Ruybalid, Amy Shane, Mike Sieh, Mark Skillstad, and Jane Stavem.

Gerry Osborn was not in attendance, but he arrived for the afternoon portion of the meeting.

NDE staff members present during all or some of the meeting were the following: Commissioner Matt Blomstedt, Brian Halstead, Deb Frison, Donlynn Rice, Sharon Katt, Diane Stuehmer, Dean Folkers, Michele Borg, Julane Hill, Amy Rhone, Sue Anderson, Aprille Phillips, Matt Heusman, Valorie Foy, Don Loseke, Rick Moses, and Dennis McGuire.

Following greetings and introductions, Mike Sieh reviewed the agenda. Dale Fornander moved to approve the agenda, and Troy Lurz seconded the motion.

Voting yes: Elizabeth Boyle, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Abby Freeman, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Msgr. John Perkinson, Kevin Riley, Joe'l Ruybalid, Amy Shane, Mike Sieh, Mark Skillstad, and Jane Stavem.

Voting no: none

Approval carried 20-0 with 1 absent.

Members reviewed the minutes of the May 21, 2015, meeting. Brian Gegg moved to accept the minutes, and Dale Hafer seconded the motion.

Voting yes: Elizabeth Boyle, Josie Floyd, Dale Fornander, Abby Freeman, Brian Gegg, Dale Hafer, Pat Hoehner, Jed Johnston, ReNae Kehrberg, Mitch Kubicek, Freida Lange, Troy Lurz, Travis Miller, Msgr. John Perkinson, Kevin Riley, Joe'l Ruybalid, Amy Shane, Mark Skillstad, and Jane Stavem.

Voting to abstain: Mike Sieh

Voting no: none

Approval carried 19-0 with 1 absent and 1 abstaining.

Freida Lange reviewed with members the purpose and direction of the committee's responsibilities per Nebraska statute. She stressed that the committee is a group representing a wide variety of schools and

personnel throughout the state, and this diversity helps provide clear prioritization of what will best serve the Nebraska students today and tomorrow.

### **Purpose and Direction**

Dr. Blomstedt stressed the efforts of the State Board and the Nebraska Department of Education are to create an atmosphere of support and leadership that will best meet the needs of educators across the state in order for them to effectively serve students. He described the efforts of the Department to launch a vision of education for the state and to examine what is being done around accreditation and school improvement that will do the right things for students. He noted that the state board, with outside assistance and consultation, is developing a strategic plan this summer to assist in the creation of a biennial budget. He reported that this effort will help identify key investments and priorities. He emphasized that the vision and direction of the state board will focus on two themes -- accountability and equity. He described the ongoing efforts to create a balanced accountability system and the need to address issues of equity created by such factors as poverty.

### **2016 Legislative Update**

Deputy Commissioner Brian Halstead shared information about two legislative bills affecting education. The first bill is LB 868, introduced by Senator Krist, that would add the high school graduation requirement that student pass a civics exam similar to that which immigrants must pass in order to become United States citizens. The second bill, introduced by Senator Scheer, is LB 930 and would allow the State Board to select a national test for eleventh graders, other than the NeSA.

### **Certificates, Permits, and Counseling Endorsements**

Sharon Katt provided members a detailed handout of Rule 21 descriptors of certificates and permits. She noted for members that a permit constitutes anything less than a full certificate. The handout provided nine different certificate and permit descriptions that will assist administrators as they review individual school needs and educators' backgrounds that can best serve the students in their schools. She shared that the newest Rule 21 is awaiting the governor's signature. She informed the committee that she is working with an ad hoc committee to clarify and specialize the middle school certificate where candidates will have greater content area preparation and specifications. Additionally, she said that her division will be working to review two areas, first the requirements for counselors and the changing needs of schools in relationship to this area, and the second area will be looking at the special preparations and qualifications of curriculum directors.

### **ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act)**

Diane Stuehmer gave members an overview of ESSA and its implications for Nebraska schools. She shared that her overview of ESSA elements is not permanent until all the regulations have been written that will accompany this new law. However, she noted that ESSA does give states greater control and flexibility than was in the previous law. She enthusiastically stated that AYP is gone. State testing remains, and sub group data will still be collected because there is still considerable emphasis on equity. ESSA does not mention highly qualified teachers nor does it require statewide teacher evaluation policies with a component of student achievement. She is providing members an electronic copy of what she reported.

### **Advisor Dashboard Update**

Dean Folkers provided members a PowerPoint description and narration of how his division is in year two of the five-year rollout strategy for the dashboard that will provide schools a tool for management of their school data to help inform instruction. He stressed that the April 18-19 AQuESTT Conference will be “Continuing to Improve with Data” and will provide participants an opportunity to share emerging practices and technical assistance. With the promise of a one place log-in, he noted the capabilities that this will have for individualization of data that in turn will benefit the educators but also better inform students and parents.

### **ESIS (Education of Systems-Involved Students) and Rule 18**

NDE consultant Michele Borg provided members several informative handouts that describe the states Interim-Programs and Special Purpose schools serving any school-age child or youth involved or at risk of becoming involved in the child welfare, juvenile criminal justice, or behavioral health system. While she noted what services these programs and schools offer, she emphasized the great need for effective communication between the students’ resident schools and the placement institutions that provide temporarily for their education. For a working lunch, she provided members four questions for consideration in regards to their collaboration with out-of-home placements: What challenges are they facing, what have the schools found that works, what doesn’t work, and what are the schools’ needs?

### **Health/PE Standards Update**

Julane Hill reported that her team has a committee of 29 members representing a wide range of personnel throughout the state involved in writing standards for physical education. She provided members a handout of the timeline for these standards with a target date of State Board adoption in August 2016. She is also organizing an ad hoc committee to work in collaboration with the writing committee to address curricular needs of physical education teachers so that the content of activities in their classes are ones that truly address physical development and education and not just athletic competition.

### **Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support Systems (PBIS)**

Amy Rhone informed members about what PBIS is and how she is leading a statewide initiative to encourage and assist schools to apply and become PBIS schools. She noted that PBIS is an “exciting” system that promotes positive behavior. With positive behavior, a safe and positive learning environment results for students to experience the greatest potential for academic and behavioral success. She shared that she is in the process of writing a grant for the continuation of the program and is surveying schools to determine their needs so that alignment with academics can occur. She provided members a handout that explained what PBIS is, how it is implemented, and its major goals.

### **Update on AQuESTT and EBA**

Sue Anderson shared a PowerPoint presentation with members showing how many schools and districts were classified in each of the four accountability categories. She then told members how the Evidence Based Analysis (EBA) information was applied to schools to modify their classifications. She described and shared sample questions from the thirty responses of the EBA. She said that next steps will be to run data for the needs improvement schools in order to determine common themes. Matt Heusman and Aprille Phillips then described the designation of priority schools process. They outlined the efforts that were made to determine what measurable data NDE had on each of the needs improvement schools that would better inform what schools might be most in need of assistance. Once this data and EBA results were taken into account, the needs improvement schools generated four different themes: those in a rural context, the demographically challenging students, the large urban districts, and schools on reservations. Because they could only choose three priority schools, no school from the demographically challenging students was chosen. They noted that moving forward the desired disposition is to listen to what is happening in each of the three schools, developing data on each of the schools, and aligning ESU support systems to serve the schools. They shared that the designation process only begins again when the State Board releases one of the three schools. All three schools will have progress plans submitted to the State Board by August.

### **Assessment Update**

Much of Valorie Foy's presentation focused on what impact ESSA may have on the NeSA testing. She shared that it is mostly a wait and see what the consequences of the law may have. She did share a number of possibilities such as opening the possibility that local tests that are valid and reliable may be used for state scores. She further noted that no more than two percent of instructional time could be used for state testing. She said that in Nebraska, state testing is using just one percent of instructional time. She provided members a transition chart for ELL testing. She further discussed the implications for text based analysis (TBA) writing on the state assessments. As for the AQuESTT classification update, she described for members what her team and the psychometricians did with the formula in order to make sure the process was as fair and balanced as possible for all districts: small, large, urban, rural, etc. The ultimate process assured that all schools had the potential to receive compensatory points.

### **Effective Educator Update**

The statewide efforts to develop teacher/principal effective practices (standards) began in 2011, and seventeen schools participated in the two-year pilot that ended last year. Donlynn Rice, who spearheaded these efforts, reported that the State Board has commissioned a study of the state evaluation teacher/principal model and plans to release it in March. In the meantime, she has been working with school districts to familiarize them with the model and how it can be effectively implemented. She noted that ESSA does not require student performance to be a part of teacher/principal evaluation.

### **Continuous Improvement Workshops**

Don Loseke reported the specific numbers of participants for the five school improvement workshops that were held across the state this past fall. He noted that over a three-year trend, the enrollment has increased nearly twenty percent with this year's enrollment of 746. He further described the structure

of the workshops and especially how the first day was modeled around the six tenets of AQuESTT. He encouraged participation in the April 18-19, 2016 AQuESTT conference to be held in Kearney.

### **School Safety and Security Standards**

In the absence of Jolene Palmer, the State School Safety Director, Freida Lange shared with members the packet materials that are the draft form of the State Safety Standards presented to the State Board at their January 2016 meeting. She drew members' attention especially to the rubrics document that would give members a more detailed explanation of the safety standards.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20.